



SPECIAL BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, March 24, 2021

BOARD MEMBERS:

Georgia Hanigan, Commissioner, Payette County – present
Lyndon Haines, Commissioner, Washington County - present
Keri Smith, Commissioner, Canyon County - present
Kelly Aberasturi, Commissioner, Owyhee County – present
Viki Purdy, Commissioner, Adams County – present
Sam Summers, MD, Physician Representative – present
Bryan Elliott, Commissioner, Gem County – not present

STAFF MEMBERS:

Nikki Zogg, Katrina Williams

Via Zoom: Doug Doney, Troy Cunningham, Ashley Anderson, Rachel Pollreis, Carol Julius

GUESTS: Members of the public attending in person; Guests viewing live stream via SWDH YouTube page.

CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER

Vice-Chairman Aberasturi called the meeting to order at 1:04 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Kelly Aberasturi – present; Dr. Summers - present; Chairman Elliott – not present; Commissioner Hanigan – present; Commissioner Purdy – present; Commissioner Haines – present; Commissioner Smith - present

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Board members reviewed the agenda.

MOTION: Commissioner Smith moved to accept the agenda as presented. Dr. Summers seconded the motion. All in favor; motion carries.

IN-PERSON PUBLIC COMMENT

Members of the public presented in-person public comment.

HEALTH ALERT LEVEL DISCUSSION

Rachel Pollreis, Data Analyst, Senior, presented the proposed plan to transition the Southwest District Health COVID-19 Health Alert Level system to a weekly regional summary following discussion at last week's Board of Health meeting.

The summary would be distributed on Wednesday and reflect the changes in hospitalization rate and fatality rate to a cumulative basis. No assignment of colors or recommendations will be included. The data contained within the weekly summary is intended to inform county emergency managers, school officials, business owners, and event planners who rely on this information.

Rachel explained that the documents will be made available by request if school districts or businesses want to continue to use those.

In addition, Southwest District Health will continue to follow the Governor's orders and will follow CDC guidance by providing recommendations and consultations to the public.

Nikki provided feedback from the schools regarding removal of the health alert level system. After talking to our school partners, the majority have utilized the weekly Health Alert Level System report and find it to be helpful.

In addition to school partners, some of our region's county emergency managers utilize this health alert level information and asked that data regarding demographics and cluster outbreak information be available to them.

Board members discussed face covering recommendations. Nikki clarified that SWDH will continue to link to CDC guidelines and will follow CDC guidance when providing recommendations and consultations to the public.

Following questions from Board members regarding how events will be handled, Nikki clarified that SWDH has never required that event planners come through us for approval. She explained that currently there is a state order signed by the Governor that requires the plan being submitted for those events with event size over 50. Our agency reviews and files the attestations for events over 50. Staff are available to help event planners in their decision making and SWDH staff is available to provide reviews and recommendations.

Board members again discussed face covering requirements and Commissioner Haines pointed out that with the retirement of the health alert level, all recommendations are thereby removed. Staff will point callers or those seeking education or input to CDC guidance.

MOTION: Commissioner Hanigan made a motion to adopt the weekly regional summary as presented by Rachel. Commissioner Haines seconded the motion. Four in favor; two opposed. Motion passes.

EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION

Nikki provided an overview of the employee compensation conversation last year at budget time when the board decided to not approve pay increases for staff based on uncertainty of the economic and financial impact of COVID-19.

For fiscal year 2022, the guidance from the state includes two items the legislature approved: an adjustment of pay scale upward by 2% and a 2% change in employee compensation.

Nikki highlighted some recruitment and retention challenges recently encountered during hiring for recruitment. She also explained that salary compression issues have been encountered and have impacted some of our staff.

Nikki provided a summary of pay compensation changes over the last three fiscal years at SWDH and the six counties it serves.

Nikki asked to recognize staff hired prior to July 1, 2020 with a 2% fiscal year 2021 merit-based increase. Nikki also asked for a 3% merit-based increase for fiscal year 2022 for all staff who have successfully passed entrance probation.

Nikki clarified that the implementation date referenced on the slide presented to board members should be July 1, 2021. At our next board meeting a budget proposal will be provided to Board members. Following that board meeting, Nikki and Troy will present the SWDH fiscal year 2022 Budget Proposal to each of our region's six counties' Boards of County Commissioners. The Budget Committee will then vote in May on the SWDH Proposed Budget.

Board members asked about the potential impact of pending legislation, House Bill 316, that would shift funding of public health districts if it passes. The bill was tabled in the Senate Health and Welfare Committee prior to having public comment heard. Nikki is unsure if the bill will be heard when the Senate returns from recess. Nikki also explained that there are some hospitals who have an interest in changing language in the bill.

Board members asked if this bill eliminates all of the State code to remove the State's authority or would that still stay with the state. Commissioner Hanigan is not sure of the authorities but in the bill as written medical indigency to the Counties would be substantially eliminated. An individual who is eligible for Medicaid but chooses not to enroll would not be eligible for any county medical indigency.

MOTION: Commissioner Purdy made a motion to approve the 2% merit-based alternate recommendation for fiscal year 2022. Commissioner Smith seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion passes.

Commissioner Aberasturi stated they will be going into another budget year and can then bring it back after knowing the impact from the legislation.

IADBH EXECUTIVE COUNCIL UPDATE

Nikki provided an executive council update as previously covered with the House Bill update.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Budget Committee

Nikki explained that the SWDH budget is approved by the budget committee which is comprised of each board of county commissioners' chairman or their proxy. Nikki asked for input from board members regarding the need to meet with this budget committee prior to budget presentations. Board members support continuing as normal and they will provide information to their chairmen as needed.

Legislative Update

Nikki provided a legislative update and a brief summary of pending legislation that may impact the public health districts.

IADBH Annual Meeting

The annual meeting will be in June in Twin Falls this year and will last about two hours. Nikki asked board members interested in attending in person to respond to Katrina for assistance with making travel arrangements and completing necessary reservations and per diem and mileage reimbursements.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:39 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:



Nikole Zogg
Secretary to the Board

Approved as written:



Bryan Elliott
Chairman

Dated: April 27, 2021